

**REMARKS**

The Office Action dated February 14, 2006, required restriction to one of the following:  
Group I, claims 1-7, drawn to a method for processing mass mailing by using [a] sorting machine; and

Group II, claims 8 and 9, drawn to an apparatus for handling mass mailing by using [a] sorting machine.

The Office Action, p.2, stated that the inventions “listed as Groups I and II do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT rule 13.1 because ... Group II does not have the technical feature that [is] required in Group I: the sender that includes a shrink-wrapped device wherein the mailings are [inserted] between the strips of film to form a strip of bags.”

Applicant has amended Claim 8 to specify a “device for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 1 wherein mailings of a mass mailing are shrink-wrapped by a packaging unit at the sender in strips of film, hanging together to form a strip of bags and dispatched hanging together in this way in a strip of bags.” Applicant respectfully submits that claim 8, as amended, now incorporates the required technical feature. Therefore the restriction requirement should be withdrawn.

Alternatively, Applicant traverses the requirement and requests reconsideration of the requirement pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.143. Pursuant 37 C.F.R. §1.475(b), [a]n international or a national stage application containing claims to different categories of invention will be considered to have unity of invention if the claims are drawn only to one of the following combinations of categories: .... (4) A process and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the said process. Applicant submits that claims 8 and 9 are directed to apparatus “specifically designed” to carry out the process recited in claim 1 and are therefore not subject to restriction.

Applicant provisionally elects the claims of Group I for prosecution in this application without waiver of the right to file divisional or continuation applications directed to the same or similar subject matter.

Applicants have made an earnest effort to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable action and passage of the case to issue are respectfully requested.

It is believed that no additional fee is due. If this is incorrect, the Commissioner is

hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required by this paper to Deposit Account No. 50-1588.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip G. Meyers", written over a horizontal line.

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